

(Public Hearing, Salmon, Idaho, October 8, 1997)

8 MR. BURTENSHAW: My name is Don Burtenshaw. I  
9 am a senator from District 26, and I would like to tell  
10 these people who are here conducting these hearings, we  
11 appreciate the opportunity of having the hearing in our  
12 area, both in Challis and in Salmon.

13 I feel it is important and appropriate to have  
14 these hearings in these areas, in which this is the part  
15 of the state which is the most affected by the grizzly  
16 recovery program. And I think it's very important that  
17 their testimonies are considered and hopefully that this  
18 is just not a futile effort to fill the intent of the  
19 law, that these feelings will be respected and  
20 recorded.

21 I hope that the testimony given here will have  
22 an impact on the decision that the fish and game make  
23 and the Department of Interior. One of the problems  
24 with political decisions are that the decisions are made  
25 too far away from the point of impact. I am not nearly

39

-----  
1 so afraid of the grizzly as I am the Endangered Species  
2 Act and the government rules and controls that come with  
3 them.

4 I love this country and the beautiful  
- 5 mountains, hills and streams and wildlife, and I have  
- 6 been in the Selway-Bitterroot area for many years of my  
- 7 life, and I think it's wrong to try to introduce some  
- 8 200 grizzly bears over a period of from 50 to 110 years  
- 9 and take an area of three to four million acres to try  
- 10 to use it as an experimental introduction of the grizzly  
- 11 bear in this area.  
- 12 And the reason for it is the places that have  
- 13 been grizzly bear introductions, there are road  
- 14 closures, trails and areas of logging, hiking, camping,  
- 15 backpacking into the wilderness and other use of  
- 16 natural resources are greatly curtailed, and I am  
- 17 adamantly opposed to spending millions of dollars of  
- 18 costs tying up the millions of acres of ground to try  
- 19 for this experiment. I think it's important that the  
- 20 U.S. Fish and Wildlife and the Department of Interior  
- 21 work with the cooperation and respect the wishes of our  
- 22 congressional delegation from Idaho, Governor Batt, the  
- 23 Idaho legislators and State Department of Wildlife and,  
- 24 more importantly, the citizens of Challis and Salmon who  
- 25 are most seriously affected by the decision.

40

-----  
1        We have been very concerned about recovery of  
- 2 the Salmon in this area, and it's been an important  
- 3 issue. We all know that one of the main ingredients of  
- 4 a grizzly's diet is fish. So it will no doubt impact  
- 5 the salmon and rivers and spawning beds and will also  
- 6 affect other wildlife species in that area.

7        Also the sheep and cattle that surround the  
- 8 wilderness area, but most importantly our major concern  
- 9 is that there will be human encounters with very serious  
- 10 results. And the only way to prevent this encounter  
- 11 with the grizzlies is to either keep the people out or  
- 12 the bears out. And I would like to see it be the  
- 13 bears.

- 14        I was in Jackson, Wyoming, this morning and I  
- 15 read in the paper where too many grizzly bears have been  
- 16 destroyed by hunters and other impacts, and they were  
- 17 trying to figure out ways to stop this human impact with  
- 18 the grizzlies. One of the things that they suggested  
- 19 was use pepper spray on the bears instead of a gun. And  
- 20 I don't know about any of you, but I would hate to let a  
- 21 grizzly bear get within a few feet and see if the pepper  
- 22 spray would work.

23        My last thing is I would just like to say that  
24 as long as I can remember, Smoky the Bear has been a  
25 symbol of helping prevent forest fires in our country,

41

-----  
1 and I hope that he will continue to do that, not a  
2 symbol of with the sign no trespassing or people will be  
3 prosecuted for trying to go into that area, and not  
4 especially end up with him having a badge on his chest  
5 and a gun on his hip.

6        Thank you.